

mens from New York in Mrs. Blackburn's collection, taken, as practically all her New York specimens were, near Hempstead, Long Island. It is of interest in this connection to note that both Pennant and Latham apparently had some suspicion that their Olive Tanager was the female of the Scarlet Tanager, and their reasons for describing it as a separate species are given in the following footnote by Pennant in Latham's work (Gen. Synop. Birds, II, pt. 1, 1783, p. 218): "From their being found at this last place [New York], and my having such authority for describing both sexes, I must conclude that the species is distinct; otherwise I should have suspected it to have been the female of the last described [Scarlet Tanager]." In the description of the female of the "Olive Tanager," there is the information, omitted by Gmelin in his diagnosis, that the "under sides of the body [are] pale yellow," which is the chief difference between the adult female of *Piranga erythromelas* and the transition plumage described above. It is, therefore, evident that the male of Gmelin's *Tanagra olivacea* is the Scarlet Tanager in this odd-looking transition plumage; and its female the adult female of the Scarlet Tanager.

Gmelin, Latham, and Pennant all cite "l'Olivet Buff." as a synonym, and for this reason include Cayenne in the habitat, but the description given by Buffon, based on a specimen from Cayenne, is possibly not of the female Scarlet Tanager. At least, if it is, the alleged locality is probably wrong, since the species is not known to occur in the Guianas. At any rate, this description of Buffon does not figure at all in the diagnosis given by Gmelin, by Latham, or by Pennant; hence in determining the identity of *Tanagra olivacea* it may be disregarded as a possibly erroneous synonym.

From the above discussion it appears that the technical name of the Scarlet Tanager, now *Piranga erythromelas* (Vieillot), should become *Piranga olivacea* (Gmelin), and its type locality, Hempstead, Long Island, New York.—HARRY C. OBERHOLSER, *Washington, D. C.*

The Tanagrine Genus *Procnopis* Cabanis.—*Tangara* (formerly *Calliste*, *Calospiza*) is by far the largest genus of Tanagers, comprising about sixty distinct species. These exhibit great diversity in coloration and vary considerably in the form of the bill, but in other respects they agree rather closely.

On the one hand they are allied to the slender-billed genera *Chlorochrysa* and *Tanagrella* and on the other hand to the small-billed genus *Procnopis*. Of the latter Selater (Cat. Birds Brit. Museum, XI, p. 93) remarks "This little group of three species comes very close to *Calliste*, but has a shorter and wider bill and rather longer wings in proportion." The difference in the size and form of the bill between *Procnopis* and the majority of species of *Tangara* is very marked. Unfortunately for the standing of *Procnopis*, however, there are certain species of *Tangara* that in the form of the bill agree essentially with the members of the former group. This is particularly the case with *T. nigroviridis*, which in its small but wide, depressed bill, with weak lower mandible and short gonyes, is very similar to *Procnopis*.

In the relative length of the wing it does not differ from the latter genus, while in coloration it bears a strong resemblance to *P. atrocarulea* (the type of the genus).

T. dowi somewhat suggests *T. nigroviridis* in coloration, and while the bill appears to average larger and stouter, yet some individuals agree essentially with the latter. *T. fucosus*, closely allied to *T. dowi*, and *T. cabanisi* (known only from the type specimen), associated with *T. dowi* and *T. nigroviridis* by Selater, I have not seen. *T. cabanisi*, judging by the colored plate in 'The Ibis' (1868, pl. III), has a much larger and thicker bill than its supposed allies. In *T. heinei* (*atricapilla* auct.) and *T. argentea* the bill is depressed and much swollen laterally, the throat feathers are bifurcate and the sexes are unlike in color. *T. cyanoptera*, while agreeing in the last respect and to a considerable extent in coloration, has a thicker bill. *T. fulvicervix* and *T. melanotis* are small-billed species not very dissimilar to the species of *Procnopis* in color, but the bill is narrower and less depressed.

If *Procnopis* is to be recognized as a genus, *Tangara nigroviridis* must be transferred to it. Even with this change, however, it is extremely doubtful whether the distinction can be maintained, so complete is the intergradation between the two groups. I suggest, therefore, unless we are ready to divide *Tangara* into a number of ill-defined genera, an undertaking of doubtful practicability, that *Procnopis* be united with *Tangara*. If this is done, the latter genus will not be appreciably more heterogeneous in any respect than it is at present.

It may be noted that *Tangara argentea* was originally described as a *Procnopis* in the paper in which the latter genus was described by Cabanis. Also that *Procnopis* was not recognized by other authorities until Selater (in the British Museum Catalogue) decided that *P. atrocarulea* was more nearly allied to *Diva* (type *D. vassorii*) than to *Calliste* and united it with *Diva* under the older name *Procnopis*.

Under the arrangement suggested the three species of *Procnopis* will stand as:

Tangara vassorii (Boiss.)

Tangara branickii (Tacz.)

Tangara atrocarulea (Tsch.)

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Early Arrival of the Tree Swallow in Plymouth.— The Tree Swallow is an "early bird" in Plymouth, as elsewhere. But Plymouth seems to be unique, so far as the published records for eastern North America show, as the station of the *earliest* arrival of this "early bird." The average date for six years of first Tree Swallows seen at the Head of the Beach, Plymouth, is March 16. This compares with the usual "first week of April" reports from most places and with the Ipswich (on the other side of Massachusetts Bay) ten-year average of March 28 and with the St. Louis ten-year average of March 24 and with the Washington earliest date seen of